

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Previously Presented) A virtual reality encounter system comprising:
a first mannequin;
a first camera supported by the first mannequin, the first camera for capturing a first image of a scene;
a first processor receiving in real time the first image of the scene from the first camera supported by the mannequin, the first processor overlaying a virtual environment over one or more portions of the received real-time first image to form a first image of a virtual scene with the first image of the virtual scene including at least one remaining portion of the real-time first image, and sending the first image of the virtual scene including the at least one remaining portion of the real-time first image in real time to a communications network; and
a first set of goggles to render a second image of a virtual scene from signals received from the communications network.
2. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the first mannequin is a first humanoid robot having tactile sensors positioned along the exterior of the first robot, the sensors sending tactile signals to the communications network; the system further including a body suit having tactile actuators, the tactile actuators receiving the tactile signals from the communications network.
3. (Previously presented) The system of claim 2, further comprising:
motion sensors positioned throughout the body suit, the motion sensors sending motion signals corresponding to movements of each sensor relative to a reference point, the motion signals transmitted to the communications network; and

a second humanoid robot, receiving, from the communications network, the motion signals from the motion sensors, the motion signals from the motion sensors causing a movement of the second robot that is correlated to a movement of the body suit.

4. (Previously presented) The system of claim 3, wherein the second robot includes motion actuators corresponding to the motion sensors, the motion actuators causing the second robot to move.

5. (Previously presented) The system of claim 3, wherein the second robot has life-like features, the second robot comprises:

a body; and

a microphone coupled to the body, the microphone for sending audio signals to the communications network.

6. (Previously presented) The system of claim 5, wherein the first set of goggles further includes a first transducer to render the audio signals received from the microphone.

7. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 5, wherein the first set of the goggles and the first robot is at a first location and the first robot includes a first microphone for sending first audio signals to the communications network,

wherein the second humanoid robot is at a second location and the body of the second robot supports a second camera, the microphone coupled to the body of the second robot being a second microphone and the audio signals sent by the second microphone being second audio signals; and

the system further comprising a second set of goggles to receive the first image of the virtual scene including at least one remaining portion of the real-time first image and to receive the first audio signals from the first microphone.

8. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 7, wherein the communications network comprises:

a first communication gateway in the first location; and
a second communication gateway in the second location,
and the system further comprising a second processor connected to the first processor via
a network.

9. (Previously presented) The system of claim 6, wherein the communications network comprises an interface having one or more channels for:
receiving the audio signals from the microphone;
receiving the first image from the first camera;
sending signals representing the second image of a virtual scene to the first set of goggles; and
sending the audio signals to the first transducer.

10. (Previously presented) The system of claim 7, wherein the body includes an eye socket and the second camera is positioned in the eye socket.

11. (Previously presented) The system of claim 7, wherein the body includes an ear canal and the second microphone is positioned within the ear canal.

12. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the first set of goggles comprises a receiver to receive the second image of a virtual scene.

13. (Previously presented) The system of claim 6, wherein the first robot comprises a transmitter to wirelessly send or receive the audio signals, the tactile signals, the motion signals and the first image to or from the communications network.

14. (Previously presented) A method of having a virtual encounter, comprising:
receiving in real time a first video image from a first camera coupled to a first mannequin, the first camera sending the first video image to a communications network;

overlaying a virtual environment over one or more portions of the first video image to form a first virtual scene, the first virtual scene including at least a remaining portion of the first video image; and

rendering in real time the first virtual scene using a first set of goggles.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the first mannequin is a first humanoid robot and the method further comprises:

sending tactile signals received from tactile sensors positioned along an exterior of the first humanoid robot to the communications network; and

receiving the tactile signals from the communications network at a body suit having tactile actuators.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising:

sending motion signals from motion sensors positioned throughout the surface of a human, the motion signals corresponding to movements of each sensor relative to a reference point, the motion signals being transmitted to the communications network;

receiving, at the first humanoid robot, the motion signals sent by the motion sensors; and

causing a movement of the first humanoid robot that is correlated to a movement of the human based on the motion signals received from the motion sensors.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein receiving the motion signals comprises receiving motion signals from the motion sensors at corresponding motion actuators coupled to the first robot, causing a movement comprises the motion actuators causing the robot to move.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, further comprising:

sending first audio signals over the communications network, the first audio signals being produced from a first microphone coupled to the first mannequin ; and

transducing the first audio signals received from the communications network using a transducer embedded in the first set of goggles.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18, further comprising:
sending second audio signals to the communications network from a second microphone coupled to a second mannequin having life-like features;
sending a second video image to the communications network from a second camera coupled to the second mannequin;
rendering the second image received from the communications network onto a monitor coupled to a second set of goggles; and
transducing the audio signals received from the communications network using a second transducer embedded in the second set of goggles.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the second mannequin includes an eye socket and the second camera is positioned in the eye socket.

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the second mannequin includes an ear canal and further comprising positioning the second microphone within the ear canal.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 14, wherein the first set of goggles comprises a display to render the first virtual scene.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the second mannequin further comprises a transmitter to wirelessly send the second audio signals and the second video image to the communications network.

24. (Previously Presented) A virtual reality encounter system comprising:
a first mannequin including:
a first camera supported by the first mannequin, the first camera for capturing a first real-time image of a scene that encompasses the environment of the first mannequin;
a second mannequin including:

a second camera supported by the second mannequin, the second camera for capturing a second real-time image of a scene that encompasses the environment of the second mannequin;

first motion sensors disposed over the second mannequin, the first motion sensors sending motion actuating signals over a communications network, and

first motion actuators disposed over the second mannequin, the first motion actuators receiving motion sensing signals from the communications network;

a processor receiving in real time and processing the first real-time image and the second real-time image over the communications network, the processor configured to:

overlay a virtual environment over one or more portions of the received first real-time image to form a first image of a virtual scene with the first image of the virtual scene including at least one remaining portion of the first real-time image; and

overlay a virtual environment over one or more portions of the received second real-time image to form a second image of a virtual scene with the second image of the virtual scene including at least one remaining portion of the second real-time image;

a set of goggles having a display, the set of goggles receiving and rendering on the display at least one of the first image of a virtual scene and the second image of a virtual scene from the communications network; and

a body suit having second motion sensors disposed over the body suit, the second motion sensors sending the motion actuating signals to the first motion actuators over the communications network, the body suit further having motion actuators disposed over the body suit, the motion actuators receiving the motion sensing signals from the first motion sensors over the communications network.

25. (Previously presented) The system of claim 24, wherein the first mannequin is a humanoid robot having tactile sensors and tactile actuators.